

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2015
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ralph Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Joseph Frazier and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons and City Attorney Kenneth Davis. City Treasurer Patricia Brown City Clerk Pam Jones were not present as they were attending MASC's annual MFOCTA & BLOA meeting.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV).

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on September 8, 2015, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Robert Taylor of the Street Department was named *September Employee of the Month* and presented with a gift certificate. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Taylor for a job well done.

Mayor Davis presented Mr. E. C. Shepard the Mayor's Monthly Beautification award for September. He thanked Mr. Shepard for the hard work and service he provides to his neighbors in keeping up their yards and does it all at no charge. Mr. Shepard is an asset to the community and this award is well-deserved. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Shepard for his dedication to keeping Marion beautiful by lending a helping hand.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to accept a request from Mayor Davis to prepare a Resolution for the Azalea Garden Club, who are celebrating their 65 Years of Service in Marion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier and carried. The Resolution will be presented to the Azalea Garden Club at the November Council meeting.

Reverend Jim Kirkland of the Marion Baptist Association was present to request use of the new gym for a basketball clinic on November 14th from 9:00 til noon. This will be for 1st through 6th grades

and a local personality will speak about the importance that basketball and God is in their life. Bag lunch and drink will be provided. With the gym available on that date (per Ann Jackson), Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to allow the Marion Baptist Association use of the gym on November 14th from 9 til noon to hold their basketball clinic. Councilman Michael Baker seconded the motion; motion carried.

Mr. Willie Miles was not in attendance to make his presentation for veteran's transportation. Mayor Davis spoke with Mr. Miles and he wants our veteran's top know there is transportation available for veterans who need to go to their appointments. Mr. Miles will be on Swamp Fox Country and will go more into detail regarding this available transportation.

Councilman Emerson Hunt made a motion to allow Ms. Mollie Bethea-Floyd and Ms. Joanne Wilson (MCCANDCD) use of the Opera House on December 3rd for a reception honoring volunteers and contributors to their kickoff campaign for free tax preparation for our citizens. Councilman Michael Baker seconded; motion carried.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to close Tom Gasque Avenue (from T. Carroll Atkinson Blvd to Fairlee Street) on November 1st, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m., for a Fall Festival event being held by Revelation Ministries. No businesses or driveways will be blocked. Councilman Emerson Hunt seconded; motion carried. Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Croshaw for all they do.

Regarding the VIP Magazine advertisement, Mr. Ammons stated that this is a new magazine in the Florence area (information was sent in Council's packets) serving Florence, Marion, Dillon and Darlington counties. Mr. Ammons suggested taking a ¼ page ad at \$275.00. Municipalities were offered a special rate for one year. Councilman Ralph Atkinson inquired if this would come from our Hospitality Tax, to which Mayor Davis responded that it would. Mayor Davis commented that he had the authority to approve this, but he would rather Council make the decision. The ad would be placed in the November issue (for our Tree Lighting/Christmas events) Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to do a one-time ad at \$275.00, seconded by Councilwoman Gregg. Councilman Frazier brought up SHE Magazine from Florence and stated that he had not seen a copy of that magazine in Marion, but they were getting \$800+ in advertising and we are getting nothing in Marion. He further stated that he objects to advertising in a magazine from Florence. Councilman Ralph Atkinson stated that he differs from Councilman Frazier about SHE Magazine as he sees them all over town, including banks and

grocery stores, and they are free to the public. Other Marion businesses also advertise in SHE, along with Darlington, Hartsville, etc. and it is a nice magazine. He further stated that he is not familiar with the new one, but as the Mayor stated earlier, he has the authority to approve it as it is advertising our Christmas Tree Lighting. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson commented that there is a distribution box for SHE Magazine on Main Street. Motion carried.

Mayor Davis stated that drug money confiscated in Marion can be used for the police department and if not a reoccurring thing, he has the authority to make the call to get a police car. Mayor Davis further stated that he thought it in everyone's best interest to know what was going on and have it placed on the agenda for Council's vote. Bids were sent out to purchase a police car for one of our drug agents, who works in conjunction with the County. The only bid received was from Donny Gerald Auto Sales. Chief Tennie and Mr. Ammons looked at the vehicle (which, due to the sensitivity of keeping the description of this vehicle anonymous, will not state make or model) and it is a 2014 at a cost of \$14,500 and still has 54,000 miles worth of warranty. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to move forward on the purchase of the vehicle as recommended, seconded by Councilwoman Odessa Gregg; motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ammons commented that during the recent storm the City of Marion was very fortunate, in that we did not receive the rain other places did, we had about 10" in a 4-day span. We had only 6 houses that required help from FEMA, plus damage from a large tree that fell on Dozier Street. Mr. Ammons commented that due to preparation for the storm, we are a little behind on the grass cutting. Mr. Ammons further commented that he is happy to report that there were no injuries during this storm.

Mr. Ammons stated that the City only received only one bid for the street signs and driveway paving projects (advertised on SCIBO) and SCDOT has recommended that these projects be re-bid. Mayor Davis commented that our employees did an excellent job getting storm drains cleaned out, particularly Georgetown Street and Pine Street, the week before the storm hit. Mayor Davis believes that prayers for, and by, our community help keep us from damages seen in other places and if we continue to pray and ask God's blessings and mercies, we will continue to avoid these tragedies. If we work together, pray together and help each other rather than hurting each other, Marion will continue

to be fine. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to re-bid these projects, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney Catoe had nothing to update at this time.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Davis commented that Council received the departmental reports in their packets. Mayor Davis thanked the Voucher Committee for approving a voucher for a 94 year old veteran who has been trying to cut his own grass. There were no comments from other committees.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Councilman Michael Baker commented that he and Mr. Ammons had taken care of most of his concerns during the month, including the overgrown lots in his district that have been cut.

Councilman Joseph Frazier inquired about the sidewalks on Bobby L. Davis Blvd being extended past Watson Street. Mayor Davis responded that they would look into it and would have to ask SCDOT if they could help with this, as the City will not be able to do this alone.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson had no comment at this tie.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg asked that Mr. Ammons talk to Mr. Sanders about the grass on the 1st two blocks of Georgetown Street (on the right side) and also the house behind the Masonic Hall. The grass has gotten very high again.

Councilman Emerson Hunt commented that it was a great thing that the City got through the past rain storm in good fashion. He further commented that he returned the calls he received from citizens about their concerns and appreciated that they called him. He recognized two members from his church, Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Wilson and thanked them for their kindness to him. He also recognized his daughter, Serenity, for keeping him in line when he gets feisty. Mayor Davis welcomed Serenity to the meeting. Councilman Hunt expressed his concern about the huge boulders that have been placed by the speed bumps on the road (Commerce Drive) that go to Wal-Mart and the danger they present to drivers. Mr. Ammons responded that he would speak to Attorney about what can be done.

Mayor Bobby Davis again thanked the City employees for all they did during the rain storm and how they handled everything; Police Department, Fire Department, Street Department, Sanitation

Department. We were prepared and thankfully did not have to utilize. Thanks to Council members Baker, Frazier, Hunt and Gregg, for their calls and stopping by and thanks to the Administration for what they were able to do while he was out a few days. Mayor Davis also thanked everyone for their kindness, kind words and everything that was done to make him feel good about what was going on. The Veteran's Day program will be November 6th at the Veteran's Triangle at 3:30 p.m. There will be music and gifts for the veterans. Four flags were replaced this week and should you see any US flag that is not as appropriate as it should be, please do not hesitate to call Mayor Davis or Mr. Ammons so that it can be replaced. Taco Bell is moving along and will be opening soon, bringing more jobs to Marion. The old Cathedral Bible College has new owners. They are expecting to have 100 or more employees. Mr. Al Blake and Mrs. Patricia Atkinson have formed a committee to help improve the City of Marion. They have some great ideas and Mayor Davis is asking everyone to get on board with their plan.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to enter Executive Session for legal advice from the Attorney, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped October 13, 2015 by Alan Ammons